

"The CCC: Where You
Make the Difference!"

In This Issue:

***2002 Backcountry
Supervisors
Named***

***Corpsmember
Development Hits
the Road***

***Corpsmembers
Celebrate Cesar
Chavez Day of
Service***

***Park Bond
Projects Promote
Partnerships***

***Sponsor Focus'
Sequoia's Jim
Bernier***

***Corpsmember
Focus: Klamath's
Adam Duke***

***Milestones:
Dotty Bryan
Scot Schmier***

... and more!

The California Conservation Corps

FRONTLINE

Spring 2002

SEQUOIA DISTRICT SHOWS ITS CHARACTER

No one can say for sure exactly how they would react when confronted by a life-threatening emergency that requires quick thinking, good instincts, courage and character. A Sequoia District Conservationist 1 and two corpsmembers recently discovered, however, that they possess those special qualities typically reserved for heroes.

"They are real heroes," said Sequoia Service District Director Betty Harris.

"They did their very best with what they had to help these children in spite of the gravity of the situation. They took emergency action as soon as they were aware and worked hard to provide assistance. I am grateful for their efforts and especially for their presence of mind in responding to a situation that so tested their character and training."

The Sequoia Service District trio being hailed as heroes are Conservationist 1 Juan Mercado, crewleader Joseph Verska, 18, and corpsmember Robert Lugo, 18. The trio had spent the day pouring cement at John Doyle Elementary School in Porterville March 13 as part of a project honoring the late labor leader Cesar Chavez. They returned later that afternoon for the finishing touches, but several minutes into their work, they heard frantic cries for help.

"Across the street, somebody was crying and screaming hysterically," Juan said. "I saw a huge dirt pit. As I got closer, the screams got louder and I could see that someone was buried down there. Joe and Robert jumped over an eight-foot barbed wire fence and started digging. I called 911 and we all just started digging frantically with our hands. We realized that we had to dig faster and faster. I kept thinking about my own daughters."

Juan, Joseph and Robert managed to dig out all three of the little girls who were buried alive when a wall of dirt collapsed around them. The three young CCC men were first to arrive at the scene. They tried to dig the girls out until paramedics, sheriff and fire department officials arrived to help. According to the Fresno Bee, two girls, Alyssa Ortiz, 9, and Andrea Cavasos, 12, died despite the CCC trio's attempts to save them. Miranda Hernandez, 11, one of the youngsters pulled from the dirt by corpsmembers, was released from the hospital several days later.

Photo: Juan Salazar



Sequoia District Director Betty Harris applauded the heroic efforts of crewleader Joseph Verska, corpsmember Robert Lugo and C1 Juan Mercado.



DIRECTOR'S PERSPECTIVE



April took me to a wide spectrum of events that showcased the tremendous diversity of environmental and community-oriented projects and people affiliated with the California Conservation Corps.

Some of these events included speaking at an Arbor Day celebration, attending a native garden dedication ceremony in honor of labor leader and human rights activist Cesar Chavez, speaking at an elementary school named for United Farmworkers leader Dolores Huerta, and meeting with California Department of Transportation Chief Deputy Director Tony Harris. Mr. Harris and I discussed developing a closer working relationship between our respective agencies. Our discussions will result in new employment training opportunities for corpsmembers and quality projects for Caltrans.

In early April, the CCC's Corpsmember Development Coordinators met at headquarters and I was honored to speak with these individuals who play a vital role in enhancing and improving the experiences of our corpsmembers. I was pleased by their responsiveness, encouraged by the energy and enthusiasm they demonstrated, and inspired by their apparent willingness and determination to take corpsmember development to a higher level.

A more serious issue of note occurred earlier this month at a Resources Agency workshop on sexual harassment, discrimination and retaliation in the workplace. Approximately 15 CCC staff and I attended this workshop that provided timely training regarding potential legal liability and the effect of sexual harassment, discrimination and retaliation on workplace morale. We all deserve and are entitled to a workplace free of such non-productive and illegal conduct.

I also visited two members of the CCC family who are recovering from serious medical conditions. Thomas Brundage Jr., a corpsmember at our Klamath Service District, recently suffered a brain aneurysm. I visited with him during my attendance at the National Forum for Black Public Administrators Annual Conference in Portland, where he was hospitalized. I met his parents and the prognosis for Thomas' recovery is good. As a matter of fact, Thomas, his father and I were on the same plane departing Portland. Although he will require additional physical therapy, he wants to return to the CCC when he's able.

Sherman Howse, a CCC crewleader working for Recruitment in Los Angeles, is also recovering from injuries he sustained when he was hit by stray bullets in Los Angeles after returning home from a movie. I visited him at his aunt's home, where he was recovering. He is expected to recover fully and I understand he is back in the CCC fold on a limited duty.

Finally, I want to share some thoughts about a speech I heard by Dr. DeForest Soaries Jr., former Secretary of State for New Jersey. Mr. Soaries spoke at the NFBPA conference. He spoke passionately about improving human relations, especially in light of September 11th. He pointed out that all people need to understand one another much better. He illustrated his points with several poignant references to his grandmother and the rich experiences and traditions she acquired that molded his personal development and who he became as a public servant. Dr. Soaries' clarion call for better understanding comes at a critical time when our global community is divided by hatred, violence and poverty. Actor Ossie Davis also spoke, stating that we live in a world of "haves and have nots." He urged us to bridge the gap by doing a better job of valuing humanity. What will you do to meet the challenge? Think about it, then act and make a difference!



CORPSMEMBER DEVELOPMENT "ROAD SHOW" GETS UNDERWAY

In April Corpsmember Development and Project Support analysts took to the road to spread the word about the California Conservation Corps' renewed emphasis on Work-Based Learning and Specialized Training.

Through the new CCC 2001/02 Program Quality Restoration Budget Change, Corpsmember Development and Project Support seeks

Training. The unit presented the revised Corpsmember Individual Development Plan (IDP) and Evaluation as well.

These meetings included initial sessions with district leadership followed by meetings with line staff. Some visits were brief, centering on the proposal's 300-page User's Guide. Other trips were more involved with districts reconciling

Now districts have the incentive to try one of several previously unpaid activities such as model projects and service reflection. Tracking these activities is critical since solid data can hopefully leverage additional relief funding in the future.

Since 1999, the IDP and Evaluation, under revision by

Photo: Elisa Rocha-Bupara



Corpsmember Development and Project Support staff gathered for annual meeting at headquarters.

to provide training above and beyond what has been historically provided to corpsmembers.

With the additional funds, Corpsmember Development and Project Support expects hours devoted to training to increase at each district. Julie Wolsey, Pat Sigler and Rico Rodriguez comprise Team Blue. Tracie Walker, Cynthia Aguayo and Charlene Tapia make up Team Green and Victor Johnson, Joan Bennett and Merrold Young represent the Red Team.

The teams traveled to each district and a few satellites to discuss the BCP's two components — Work-Based Learning and Specialized

added workloads with staff already stretched thin.

The "road show" is a culmination of efforts beginning at the start of the fiscal year when committees from the field submitted course outlines for Specialized Training. Headquarters and Training Institute staff worked to shape the outlines into standardized curricula, while ordering materials, updating and refining lessons and otherwise creating a process for corpsmembers to receive more consistent training in skills in alignment with industry standards.

Work-Based Learning is more than a rehash of Work/Learn from the days before reimbursement.

several work groups, is also sensitive to varied staffing patterns and other resources between districts. The latest products bring together the best features of recent prototype forms and processes.

"The Corps is on the brink of something great," said CMD and Project Support Manager Virginia Clark. "I feel the synergy between the field and headquarters and I believe it has never been so right, or so strong. I am excited about where we are going together and how that benefits the young men and women of California."



HAPPY TRAILS TO BACKCOUNTRY 2002 SUPERVISORS AND CREWS

The California Conservation Corps/AmeriCorps Backcountry Trails Program got off to a great start April 16, when 102 corpsmembers met their crew mates for the first time at orientations at the Delta and Del Norte centers.

Six crews were assembled from 181 applicants from the CCC, Local Corps, National Corps and the Internet. This year's Backcountry team includes a representative from the Mexican Conservation Corps. During the next five months Backcountry crews will be hitting the trails in Yosemite & Kings Canyon national parks, the Inyo National Forest, the Klamath National Forest, the Shasta-Trinity National Forest, Big Basin State Park, Humboldt Redwoods State Park, the Stanislaus National Forest, and Plumas/Eureka State Park.

The following highly-dedicated and talented individuals will lead the crews. They will be on a permanent spike with their crew members until the program ends in September.

Phil McNeal (Klamath/Trinity Crew). Phil is returning to supervise the Klamath/Trinity crew. He previously supervised crews in '97 Klamath/Trinity and '98 Kings Canyon. Phil also participated as a Backcountry corpsmember on the Trinity/Inyo '85 crew. Phil works for the Klamath National Forest and has worked many times as a Forest Service sponsor with CCC Backcountry crews. Phil graduated with honors from Humboldt State University in 2001, with a degree in Natural Resources.

Steve Donnelly (Inyo Crew). Steve is returning for his second season as a Backcountry Supervisor. He supervised the Yosemite II Backcountry crew in '00, spent three years as a crew supervisor for the East Bay Conservation Corps, lead crews for the Southeast Alaskan Guide Association, and most recently worked with the Urban Creeks Council. He graduated from Penn State University in 1993, with a degree in Sociology.

Kiva Vigil (Stanislaus Crew). Kiva will be supervising his first Backcountry crew this summer. He has been a corpsmember, crewleader, and crewleader 2 and has been a Conservationist 1 at the Los Padres Service District since June 1998.

Mike Vukman (Kings Canyon Crew). Mike is returning for his third season as a Backcountry Supervisor. He previously supervised the Yosemite II '99 and the Kings Canyon '00 Backcountry crews. Mike graduated from California State University, Hayward in 1995 with a bachelor's degree in Environmental Studies, and was a crew supervisor for three years with the East Bay Conservation Corps.

Brian Lussier (Yosemite I Crew). Brian has been a Conservationist 1 at the San Diego Service District for four years. He was a Backcountry corpsmember on the Yosemite I '96 crew, went on the Australia Exchange as a corpsmember and received the Corpsmember of the Year Award.

Tessa d'Usseau (Yosemite II Crew). Tessa is returning for her second season as a Backcountry Supervisor. She previously supervised Yosemite II '01 Crew. She graduated from Humboldt State University with a BA in Biology and has been active in coaching soccer on the North Coast for more than a decade at the college and high school level.

You will learn a lot more about their exploits in the months ahead. Best wishes and good health to the young men and women for all the hard work that will be required to repair trails in some of our nation's most cherished wilderness areas. – **Peter Lewis**



Corpsmember Profile

Adam Duke, Klamath Service District

Photo: David Boyd

Self-trust is the first secret of success. – Ralph Waldo Emerson

Adam Duke dropped out of school in 9th grade and was living aimlessly in Lompoc, California. When he turned 18, he knew he needed to change course. In August 1999, he visited a CCC recruiter in San Luis Obispo. The recruiter gave Adam two choices: Tahoe or Klamath. "I chose Klamath because I knew I would change my mind about joining," Adam said. "I think I had a fear of success."



In the Corps, Adam Duke conquered his fear of success.

After a long exhausting ride to a strange place, and into the unknown, Adam departed the bus. "I wondered if I had made the right choice when the guy who picked me up at the bus stop started driving up this windy, steep hill. I didn't know where I could be going. I was in the middle of nowhere." But his first morning at Klamath was like a mystical experience. "I looked out from the Center and saw the mist over the river," he said. "And the trees were everywhere! The vista took my breath away." Adam had traveled from a gang-infested neighborhood in Lompoc, with scarcely a tree in sight, to a community among mist-laden trees that would soon embrace him.

"At first, I felt as if they were bombarding me with information and rules," Adam recalls. "I remember Johnny Calkins telling me to pull up my pants. I asked about the other corpsmembers, thinking he was singling me out." Adam fondly remembers Johnny saying he would get to them later. Adam soon realized that nobody else was wearing the saggy pants that were so common among his friends back home. "It took me three months to realize, and one year to accept, that newer corpsmembers follow blue hats and older blue hats follow red hats." Adam had come to realize that he could succeed in his new community, and that he could help his community succeed.

Nearly three years after boarding a bus into the unknown, Adam, 20, continues to travel many new and exciting roads in the Corps. "It's kind of like college," he said. "You hang out, you work, you study, and on weekends you can camp, hike, or whatever. You can figure out what you want to do." Adam clearly is figuring things out, and building a strong foundation for life. He will soon exchange his red hat for an orange one. He improved Kings Canyon with a Backcountry crew, completed a First Responder course, obtained his food-handler's card, and completed the chainsaw course. Adam graduated from the Muir Charter High School in June 2000. He said his greatest growth came while working emergencies on C1 Mike Joyer's crew.

Bob Fitch, Adam's supervisor, said Adam is the most enthusiastic person he's ever worked with. "When he wants to learn something, he goes after it," Bob said. Adam enjoys working with Bob. "When corpsmembers ask for help, Bob asks, 'Did you look it up?' He tells us that it might be easier to learn on the job, but we must learn to use all the tools." Adam plans to complete three years in the CCC and enroll in the College of the Redwoods. He wants to become a firefighter and a journeyman carpenter. Adam has earned self-respect. "I'm not involved in drugs, I am able to trust people and myself, and I have calmed down," he said with pride.

It's amazing how far a person can go when he dares to journey and dares to succeed. -- *Buzz Breedlove, CCC Deputy Director*



CORPSMEMBERS DELIVER AT CESAR CHAVEZ DAY OF SERVICE

The California Conservation Corps celebrated the legacy of farm labor leader Cesar Chavez with various service projects throughout the state. From planting trees to constructing school benches and distributing lunches to farmworkers, corpsmembers kept alive the Chavez tradition of volunteerism and service to communities. Here are some notable CCC Cesar Chavez Day activities:

The **Delta Service District** kicked off its new Cesar Chavez Service Club at a special celebration at Dolores Huerta Elementary School in Stockton in honor of the late labor leader. Corpsmembers from Delta and students at the school will participate in the Chavez Club, which is designed to encourage students to become involved in community service and to undertake projects that improve their communities. The students and corpsmembers will meet monthly to do various service projects. A Delta District staff member and a Dolores Huerta School teacher will oversee the club.

At the April 5 celebration, CCC Director Wes Pratt provided one of the keynote addresses. Other guest speakers included Principal Sandra Lepe, Jess Serna of the Stockton Unified School District, and Alfred Chavez, former United Farm Workers organizer and nephew of the late Cesar Chavez. Students and corpsmembers also read essays about Cesar Chavez. The festivities included music by Trio Cancun. – *Tom Miller*



CCC Director Wes Pratt talked about Chavez's contributions.

Los Angeles Service District – In partnership with the Harbor City Elementary School and The Volunteer Center, CCC corpsmembers constructed 17 planters for the school. Built out of redwood, corpsmembers cut and welded the stands and constructed the boxes themselves. The school is 95% asphalt with little or no green on its grounds -- until now. – *Glen Stuter*



Photos: Tom Miller

At left, Delta District Director Paul Carrillo welcomed crowd to Chavez Day of Service activities.



Trio Cancun added to the festivities.



...More Cesar Chavez...

Los Padres Service District – Corpsmembers helped sponsor a special distribution of sack lunches to farmworkers as they worked in various fields in San Luis Obispo County. The CCC partnered with the Central Coast Chapter of the Association of Mexican American Educators. Corpsmembers also participated in special ceremonies at the Nipomo Community Park, where they planted native trees and bushes at the park's Cesar Chavez Memorial Garden. Director Pratt attended and spoke about Chavez's contributions to the state.

Photo: Bobby Jo Close



Director Pratt and Philip LaFollette at Chavez Native Garden dedication.

Sierra Service District – The Tahoe Basin AmeriCorps Program held a Cesar Chavez celebration at a local school. The celebration included speakers and a documentary as well as poetry readings by Jason Howard. AmeriCorps members Juan Urizar, Haley Hardcastle, Coby Porter, Darin Guilliot and Cheryl Lee developed the event. The turn-out of 70 people included 30 CCC and AmeriCorps members. Festivities included a raffle and five local children between 3 and 12 years of age won candy-stuffed piñatas. – *Chris Malinowski*

Photo: Dana Glicksman

Shasta Pacific Service District — Twelve corpsmembers from the Redding Center participated in a Cesar Chavez Day Celebration. The corpsmembers went to Simpson College where numerous local nonprofit organizations, including themselves, had set up booths. The focus for these groups was to share how each of us in our own way supports the principles Cesar Chavez stood for. K-12 students from area schools attended and participated in a variety of team-building activities. Everyone had a great time. – *Dana Glicksman*



Shasta Pacific staff and corpsmembers engaged in team-building exercises.



Los Angeles District Corpsmembers weld planters for Harbor City Elementary School.





Milestones

20 YEARS OF CCC SERVICE

Scot Schmier, Southern California

When Scot Schmier left home at 17 for new frontiers, he left behind a loving, close-knit family. Fortunately, Scot landed at the CCC where he found the next best thing – friendship, camaraderie and the lasting relationships that are often forged in the Corps.

“I grew up in a good, functional family with parents who are still married to this day,” he said. “And when you leap into the world at 17, you need folks to be there for you. In the CCC, there was always someone there for me.”

Scot liked so much of what he saw and learned in the CCC that he chose to make the Corps a career. In March, Scot celebrated 22 years of service in the CCC, two as a corpsmember and crewleader and 20 in various CCC staff positions.

Scot joined the Corps after listening to family friend Jim Teegardin talk about working at Yosemite National Park and fighting wildfires. “I couldn’t believe they were paying him to do that,” he said. “I spent my senior year in the Youth Conservation Corps in the Cleveland National Forest so when I graduated, I signed up with the Corps and spent 30 days in the Bret Harte Training Academy.”

The work proved somewhat grueling. “It really tested one’s commitment to pursuing one’s goals,” Scot said. “To succeed, you definitely needed to be committed.”

From there, Scot moved on to Barstow where he spent the next eight months. “One day I woke up to find that the 20 other corpsmembers I came in with were no longer there,” he said. “I wondered what I was going to do next. Barstow was hot and windy, but had beautiful sunsets and sunrises. I remember doing physical training at 5:30 in the morning and watching the sun rise in the desert. It was inspirational and took my mind off the exercises.”

Later, Scot returned to Bret Harte where he earned his crewleader red hat. He remained there for about six months. Then came Salmon Restoration and Conservationist 1 posts at the then-San Bernardino and San Gabriel centers. Scot moved on to grade crew and fire crew supervisor at Pomona, where he also worked as a C1 recruiter. In 1992 Scot promoted to Conservation Supervisor for the Los Angeles Recovery Program resulting from the Rodney King riots. In 1995 he moved to the Norwalk Energy Center and helped open the Southern California Energy Program. Since September 2000, Scot has been the Corps’ Field Safety Coordinator for Southern California districts.

“One of the greatest things I’ve come to realize is that the longer I’m not a C1, the more I miss it,” he said. “I miss the crew dynamics, the team concept and team building. I miss the great satisfaction that comes from completing projects ahead of time and having the work serve as the basis for corpsmember development. The cornerstone of having corpsmembers find themselves is hard work. If corpsmembers can learn to be good, hard workers with a good work ethic, that’s the foundation for launching into successful lifestyles and an honest day’s wage.”

Scot said many CCC staff have been positive influences in his life and career. He met and married his wife Susan while in the Corps. They have three daughters Shannon, 16, Samantha, 12, and Savannah, 5. He has fond memories of wonderful people and places. “What stands out are the countless positive impressions staff and corpsmembers made upon me,” he said. “There are also many people no longer in the program that are out because they made poor decisions. But I was always able to see their positive attributes and I learned from them by filtering out the negative aspects. There are also individuals still in the



Milestones

15 YEARS OF CCC SERVICE

Dorothy Bryan, Shasta Pacific Service District

Shasta Pacific's Supervising Cook Dorothy "Dotty" Bryan loves to keep a personal journal. Recently, Dotty dug out the journal entry for her first day on the job as a California Conservation Corps cook at the Academy in San Luis Obispo in 1987.

"I don't think I can handle this," the entry states. But, fifteen years later, Dotty is still cooking up wonderful meals for Shasta Pacific Service District corpsmembers. "I'm still here," she said last month.

In April, Dotty celebrated 15 years of service with the CCC, but plans to hang up the pots and pans. "I promised myself when I was 22 that I was going to retire at 62," Dotty said. "I feel great. I made it. I'm ready to relax and smell the roses." May 3 will be Dotty's last day with the Corps.

Dotty heard about the Corps when she lived in Leggett where she ran her own restaurant. Mel Kreb and Gary Flosi were frequent customers. They used to encourage her to join the Corps. She finally decided to give the Corps a try, but the only opening for a cook was at the Academy.

"There I learned what the Corps was all about," she said. "There used to be a sign out front of the Academy that said, 'The Corps Starts Here,' and it did," she said. "That's where I learned. We were feeding more than 200 at a time. We had the old Army stoves from the 1940s and it was quite a challenge. We had two kitchens, one for regular staff and one for COMET. I learned how things went about."

Dotty remained there for a year before moving back to Leggett where she worked for another eight years until the center closed in the early '90s. She continued to live in Leggett, but worked in Ukiah. Then Dotty applied for a Supervising Cook post in Fortuna.

"When I retire, I'm planning on staying in Fortuna," Dotty said. "This is a really good place for seniors. People are starting to find out. We're getting a lot of seniors moving up from the San Francisco Bay Area."

Dotty is proud of the many corpsmembers she helped train in the cooking profession. "Some 26, 27, 28 corpsmembers have jobs, a lot of them still cooking," she said. "I'm very proud of Amber Imlach, who's my cook now. She was my corpsmember and went to work in Redding in the office for a while. She came back as my emergency cook. She took the test and is now my cook. I'm really proud of her."

Dotty has always enjoyed having fun. She relished Shasta Pacific's annual Halloween and Easter celebrations and other fun outings, which she will always remember. "I'll miss the corpsmembers and I'll miss the staff," Dotty said. "But I'll keep busy and volunteer at different places. I feel like I can go to some of these places and contribute in some way. I'll be OK."



Cont'd from Page 8

Corps that I was a corpsmember with, such as Virginia Clark, Erin Healy and Jim Teegardin, whose friendships I value to this day."

In his 22 CCC years, Scot worked many emergencies, including the Devore floods in San Bernardino and dozens of forest fires as well as the Oakland Hills Fire. He recalls sandbagging in a gully when a 15-foot wall of water came rushing toward him. "Everybody scrambled for high ground," he said. "These were fantastic experiences, but what means the most to me is the satisfaction that comes from a job well done, sweat equity and teamwork, as well as the adrenaline that comes from responding to emergencies and coming together as a team. There's nothing quite like it."



SPONSOR FOCUS: *Jim Berner, Southern California Edison*

In the Sequoia Service District dictionary, a great sponsor is defined in two simple words: Jim Berner.

Jim Berner works in the Southern California Edison Company's Forestry Division and has contributed mightily to the development of Sequoia Service District corpsmembers.

"Jim quickly captured corpsmembers' ability to work hard," said Juan Salazar, conservation supervisor. "He quickly convinced Southern California Edison's Hydro Division that using corpsmembers on SCE projects was a wise idea."

Jim has been working with the California Conservation Corps for nearly 15 years. He has served as project sponsor/liaison, fire instructor, chainsaw instructor, project consultant and has volunteered his personal time to help corpsmembers find jobs upon leaving the CCC.

"The CCC program is something that really enhances the youth of our state as well as our communities," Jim said. "I'm very grateful to be a part of it. I think the corpsmember development program is excellent. That's why as a liaison for Southern California Edison, I try to provide work opportunities and quality projects that enhance corpsmembers' work ethic and learning skills. During my off time, I help corpsmembers fill out applications for employment after they leave the Corps. I think there are some 40 corpsmembers working at various U.S. Forest Service/Park Service jobs in fire suppression, Helitack, Hot Shots and Engine Crews."

Born and raised in Southern California, Jim joined the U.S. Navy at 17 and served for four years. After the Navy, Jim attended college and studied fire tactics, instructor training and communications. He worked with the U.S. Forest Service for 30 years as a Hot Shot crew member/supervisor, engineer, fire prevention officer, engine captain, forest chief dispatcher, and fire management officer. He joined Southern California Edison when he retired from the Forest Service.

In June, Jim and Iva Berner will celebrate 40 years of marriage. They have two sons, Chuck and Deon. Both sons run squads on Hot Shot crews for the U.S. Forest Service, Chuck at Crane Valley in the Sierra National Forest, and Deon, in the Boise National Forest, in Boise, Idaho.

"I actually didn't encourage them toward their forestry careers," Jim said. "They grew up appreciating the outdoors and loving forestry and firefighting. They lived for 10 years at a ranger station in Southern California (Lytle Creek) in the San Bernardino National Forest where I spent 18 years, the rest of my career on the Sierra National Forest. Our sons have always had our family support and they know that."

Corpsmembers have also gained excellent firefighting knowledge from Jim's classes, which he teaches three or four times a year to Porterville and Fresno corpsmembers. His ability to turn the most seemingly mundane projects into learning opportunities for corpsmembers is pretty remarkable.

"Jim is very enthusiastic and works hard to develop safe projects that allow corpsmembers to gain new and valuable skills," Juan said. "He is unlike anyone the Sequoia District has ever worked with. On all projects, Jim ensures corpsmembers are educated about the environment and trained on how to do the work properly and safely."

Jim said he would continue to try and steer worthwhile, productive projects to the Corps with the blessing of some Southern California Edison managers who have also become advocates for the CCC.

"My greatest self-satisfaction comes from receiving telephone calls and e-mails from former corpsmembers on their career progress," Jim said. "They always remember, 'Don't You Forget It!'"



Jim Berner and Sequoia District corpsmembers.



PICTURES TELL THE STORY



At left, Los Padres District corpsmembers carried Old Glory for a stretch of its cross-country journey. The Patriot Line project began in Portland and was designed to promote unity and patriotism.



Director Wes Pratt and San Diego Service District corpsmembers at Arbor Day celebration.

Cont'd from Page 1



Juan, Joseph and Robert were shaken by the tragic events they encountered that day, but they were prepared, thanks to recent search and rescue training. "When I got there, it was shocking," said Joseph, who has been in the Corps for 18 months. "I could see the little girl's head sticking out. The first thing I thought was what if it were my little girl. It was hard and I was in tears and I was scared for her. I kept digging harder and harder. I wanted her to survive."

Joseph returned to the center and humbly accepted the support and encouragement he received from corpsmembers and staff. "I just feel like I did everything I could," he said. "It just happened that I was at the right place at the right time to try to help. As a crewleader, I'm supposed to be a leader, but when I got back to the center, I felt really down. Then my corpsmembers prayed with me. They prayed with me for the little girls and their families."

Robert, who has been in the Corps for only two months, also had a difficult time coping after the accident. He too, found comfort in the support he received from fellow corpsmembers and from his family back home in North Hollywood. "I talked with my family and they kept telling me that I did the best I could. They said they were really proud of me," he said. "I'm just glad that I was able to help. My goal is to be a firefighter and I know that these are the kind of real-life situations that I'm going to be facing. At the same time, I really feel for the families of the little girls who died. I know what it's like to lose a child. I lost a nephew who was six-years-old. It hurts."

Juan, Robert and Joseph were honored at a special ceremony at Doyle Elementary School. "I wanted to say thank you in person to all three of the guys who helped save my daughter," Miranda's mother told the Porterville Recorder.

Juan, a former corpsmember, searched for ways to make sense of the accident and the fact that they were able to save a young life. "When you think about it, if it wasn't for Cesar Chavez, nobody would have been saved that night," he said in an interview with the Recorder. "We were here working on the concrete for the benches when the accident happened. It's because of Chavez that we were there, and were able to help save the little girl."



California Conservation Corps

1719 24th Street,
Sacramento, CA 95816
Phone (916) 341-3100
1-800-952-5627
www.ccc.ca.gov

MISSION STATEMENT

The California Conservation Corps engages young men and women in meaningful work, public service and educational activities that assist them in becoming more responsible citizens, while protecting and enhancing Californians environment, human resources and communities.

CCC Director

H. Wes Pratt

Delta Service District

(Stockton) 1-209-948-7110

Klamath Service District

(Klamath) 1-707-482-2941

Pacific Bays Service District

(Vallejo) 1-707-562-3520

Shasta Pacific Service District

(Fortuna) 1-707-725-5106

Sierra Service District (Auburn)

1-530-823-4900

Inland Empire Service District

(Patton) 1-909-862-3600

Los Angeles Service District

(Norwalk) 1-562-651-5502

Los Padres Service District (San

Luis Obispo) 1-805-549-3561

Pomona Service District

(Pomona) 1-909-594-4206

San Diego Service District (San

Diego) 1-619-409-4382

Sequoia Service District

(Porterville) 1-559-782-2912

*The Frontline is a monthly
newsletter produced
by the Public Information Office.*

Submit information to
Elisa Rocha-Bupara
fax: (916) 323-1125,
phone: (916) 341-3143, or
e-mail: erbupara@ccc.ca.gov
Printed on recycled paper.

PARK BONDS PLANT SEED FOR FUTURE PARTNERSHIPS

The Klamath Service District used Year-One Park Bond money to forge a relationship with a special district that has translated into additional funding opportunities for quality corpsmember projects. Last year, when Klamath completed its Park Bonds projects a little ahead of schedule, staff turned to a local special district, the McKinleyville Community Service District, which needed a portion of a trail reconstructed. Later, when the Park Bond Office tried to find projects for some year-end reallocations, Klamath requested and received a \$15,000 augmentation to complete additional trail work for the McKinleyville district.

Pleased with the CCC work, the district successfully applied for an additional \$72,000 from another Park Bond funding source, which is to include the CCC as a major partner. Additionally, Klamath's Conservation Supervisor Larry Hand said that they are also working on a joint partnership with the district to develop a wetlands area with Proposition 13 (Water Bond) funds. "Park Bond funding opened the door for us with these guys," he said. Kudos to Klamath District staff, including Larry, Conservationist 2 Johnny Calkins and the Conservationist 1s on the projects that made the most of this opportunity.

This is a good example of using Park Bond funds as seed monies for future partnerships. Using existing CCC Park Bond set-asides as seed money for some long term local projects is a prudent and resourceful way to access future funding opportunities through the Park Bond Act. District staff should contact Richard Rodriguez (916.341.3153) for more details about other Park Bond funding information. Equally important, are the opportunities for enhancing the corpsmember experience with these projects, Larry said. "The corpsmember experience is twice the program with Park Bond projects," he added. "We train as we go and give corpsmembers an opportunity to learn skills in positive and rewarding settings."

EMERGENCY MATTERS -- CCC fire crews were dispatched to the Atmore Fire in Southern California in March. Two Pomona crews reported for duty under Bill Brumfield and Roger Ortiz, with Inland Empire's Steve Kirsch serving as CCC Agency Representative. Special thanks to the C1s and crews and to Dwayne Wilson, Sonny Smith and Steve Kirsch for their prompt response during the Chavez Holiday weekend. Speaking of emergencies, the following staff emergency training is coming up. Call Bill Vogel to enroll (916.341.3159). Training sessions for Agency Representative and Camp Support Training-for-Trainers were also held earlier this month. Next **Agency Representative** Training: Norwalk June 7, 2002 and Camarillo July 3, 2002